

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Electro Biology

Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

Electrobiology Sees Overall Gains From Simple Process Improvements

Client Profile:

Electrobiology, Inc. is a pharmaceutical company located in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. The company is owned by Biomet, a U.S.-based corporation that manufactures medical devices primarily for orthopedic medical specialists. Electrobiology, Inc. has been in operation for approximately 20 years and currently employs 160 people.

Situation:

Electrobiology, Inc. (EBI) recently expanded its operations to accommodate new product introductions. The company viewed the need for quick set-ups as an opportunity to improve cycle time. EBI contacted Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension, Inc. (PRiMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, and asked for its assistance with this project. PRiMEX and EBI have worked together in the past to introduce the concepts of lean manufacturing to the company.

Solution:

PRiMEX suggested a quick changeover kaizen event to EBI management, and recommended they select a particular piece of equipment to use in a pilot project. EBI managers decided to work on the RF machine, and assembled a kaizen team of company employees. Working with PRiMEX, the team redesigned the changeover process to create "snap-on" dies that assemble easily. The team also added 14 aluminum plates, a sliding system, new contacts, a new opening door, and appropriate handles, among other equipment changes, that make the machine more flexible and easily convertible for a variety of products.

Results:

Reduced cycle time from 30.5 minutes to 5.3 minutes--an 83 percent improvement.

Reduced overhead costs by \$15,480.

Increased annual capacity by 2,080 pads, using the same resources.

Prevented and reduced ergonomic injuries.

Increased customer satisfaction by becoming more flexible.

Testimonial:

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